

Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Comprehensive Counseling Plan

2020-2021



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GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING SERVICES

A. Role of the School Counselor:

The Counselor works under the direction of the Principals to provide students with educational, personal and vocational counseling and to identify and coordinate all available resources to empower students to reach full potential.

School counselors shall spend at least ninety percent (90%) of work time each month during the school year providing direct counseling related to students and shall devote no more than ten percent (10%) of work time each month during the school year to administrative activities provided that the activities relate to the provision of guidance services. Their services include:

- Teaching guidance curriculum as outlined by ADE standards
- Guiding individual and groups of students through the development of academic, career or personal/social plans
- Counseling individual and small groups of students
- Guiding/counseling students in course selections towards their academic goals
- Consulting with teachers, parents and staff regarding student's developmental needs and specific information about their students
- Referring students with problems and their parents to special programs and/or outside services
- Participating in activities which contribute to the effective operation of the school
- Assisting with testing as needed, including small group creations
- Planning and evaluating the campus counseling program
- Pursuing continuous professional growth
- Serving as liaison with the school-based mental health agencies/teams

Individual and Small Groups

The Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ASBVI) counseling program is designed to be preventive in nature, therefore providing students with skills to avoid or cope with crisis situations. The educational process may include individual or small group settings.

Orientation

Orientation is a process for new students and parents to adapt educationally, physically, socially and emotionally to the new setting. The new students and parents are introduced to the guidance counseling procedures and other student services offered to assist in the transition to the school. As new students enter school throughout the year, orientation may consist of individual or group sessions assisted by peer helpers.

Academic Advisement for Class Selection

ASBVI assists in the proper placements of students in an academic setting. Short and long term educational and career awareness of each student is emphasized. The counselor acts in a consulting capacity with administrators, teachers, parents and others involved in the needs of students.

Consultation Services and Appropriate Referrals

The ASBVI counselor provides consultation services to outside entities concerning student needs and general information. She collaborates, while maintaining confidentiality, with others to strengthen the team plan. She bridges the knowledge and understanding of all school patrons and employees. Typically, consultation involves:

- Serve as a committee member in the Response to Intervention (RtI) process
- Conducting professional development workshops and discussions with teachers and other school personnel on subjects such as substance abuse or child abuse
- Assisting teachers to work with individual students or groups of students
- Providing relevant materials and resources to teachers, especially relating to classroom guidance curriculum
- Assisting in the identification and development of programs for students with special needs and referring them to resources in and outside the school
- Participating in school committees that address substance abuse, human growth and development, school climate, and other guidance-related areas
- Consultation with teachers and school staff on the use of alternative methods of classroom management

- Interpreting student information, such as results of standardized tests for students and team members
- Consulting regularly with and referring to other specialists (e.g., Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW), Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC) psychiatrists, and representatives from community agencies)
- Maintaining a list of community resources, referral agencies, and hot-lines for parents, students and colleagues
- Implementing a student self-referral system and
- Collaboration and follow-up on referrals (self, RtI, SBMH, Special Education, 504, and Discipline)

Utilization of Student Records

The ASBVI counselor has authorized access to any file kept by the school district. Available data is utilized to assist parents, teachers, administrators and counselors in an endeavor to help each individual student reach his/her potential.

Interpretation of Standardized Testing and Dissemination

In conjunction with the District Test Coordinator, the counselor assists in preparing and interpreting standardized test results and other assessments. She advocates and assists in planning and implementing changes in the curriculum and interventions. She uses a variety of informal assessments to identify the social-emotional needs of students and make recommendations based on those assessments.

Follow-up of Early School Drop-outs and Graduates

ASBVI shall provide for a district-level tracking system for school drop-outs and for students who fail to reach proficiency on state-mandated assessments. The tracking system shall include provisions for student services personnel in all schools to conduct exit interviews of students who are dropping out of school and for follow-up of such students when possible.

Working with Parents and Parent Involvement

The counselor is involved in the planning and facilitation of parent involvement activities throughout the school year. She consults with parents and families on the topics of study habits, coping skills, behavior management, promotion/retention criteria, academic progress, and volunteer opportunities.

Resources for Educational and Vocational Decisions

Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired will provide an organized system of informational resources on which to base educational and vocational decision making.

Educational, Academic Assessment, and Career Counseling

The Arkansas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired will provide educational, academic assessment, and career counseling, including advising students on the national college assessments, workforce opportunities, and alternative programs that could provide successful high school completion and postsecondary opportunities for students.

Classroom Guidance

Classroom guidance will be provided, which shall be limited to forty-minute class sessions, not to exceed three (3) per day or ten (10) per week. Guidance is the instruction process of the ASBVI Counseling Program. Activities promote knowledge in academic, personal, social and career development skills. The program includes the counselor as well as the teachers, administrators, parents, and resource personnel who may also conduct sessions on such topics as:

- Self-understanding and coping skills
- Effective interpersonal and communication skills
- Problem-solving, decision-making and conflict resolution skills
- Study skills and positive attitudes toward school

- Career awareness and the work world
- Comprehension and acceptance of differences in people (racial, gender-based, cultural, religious, physical, etc.)
- Anti-Bullying

Counselor's Office

Location: The counselor's office is located on the first floor of the Helen Keller Building.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Evaluations

The counselor works with the Special Education Designee and teachers to identify students who need evaluations for psychological and educational testing.

Consultation

Consultation and counseling with parents, students, school personnel and outside agencies to ensure that all students receive appropriate services so that they are ready to succeed and are preparing for college and work.

Referral System, Resources, and Ethical Procedures

The ASBVI counselor serves as the School Based Mental Health Liaison by:

- Coordinating the use of school and community resources in collaboration with other team members
- Assisting parents in gaining access to services for their children through referral and follow-up process
- Serving as liaison between the school, home, and community agencies so that efforts to help students are successful and reinforced rather than duplicated
- The counselor follows the written policies that assure ethical procedures in psychological activities and referrals

VISITING TEACHER AND SOCIAL WORK SERVICES

(A visiting teacher is any staff member making a home visit.)

Liaison Between the Home & School/Home Visits

Home visits are made to provide continuity between home and school and to allow the pupil personnel officer/human service worker to provide assistance in meeting the needs of students. Information gained through home visits help to facilitate appropriate referrals to medical and social agencies.

CAREER SERVICES

Dissemination of Career Education Information

ASBVI will provide early career awareness activities at the middle school level and career services at the secondary level, which include, but are not limited to, the dissemination of career education information, appropriate course-taking patterns, and the effect of taking more rigorous courses so that students are better prepared for college and work success.

Career Development

The counselor in conjunction with the Lead Career and Technical Education Coordinator will provide a career planning process for each student to include career awareness, employment readiness, career information, and the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve career goals. Counselors will also encourage parents, during regular parent conferences, to support partnerships in their children's learning and career planning processes.

GROUP CONFLICT RESOLUTION SERVICES

Definition

Conflict Resolution and Anti-Bullying addresses cooperation, communication, tolerance and positive emotional expression to diffuse and resolve conflicts as they arise. Creative conflict resolution and anti-bullying activities help students reduce conflict and deal more effectively and constructively with their feelings and those of others.

Programs

The district will provide educational and social programs that help students develop skills enabling them to resolve differences and conflicts between groups; programs designed to promote understanding, positive communication; and programs designed to prevent bullying.

Anti-Bullying Description & Policy for the School

District Policy - BULLYING

Respect for the dignity of others is a cornerstone of civil society. Bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, robs a person of his/her dignity, detracts from the safe environment necessary to promote student learning, and will not be tolerated by the Board of Trustees. Students who bully another person shall be held accountable for their actions whether they occur on school equipment or property; off school property at a school sponsored or approved function, activity, or event; going to or from school or a school activity in a school vehicle or school bus; or at designated school bus stops.

A school principal or his or her designee who receives a credible report or complaint of bullying shall promptly investigate the complaint or report and make a record of the investigation and any action taken as a result of the investigation.

Definitions:

“Attribute” means an actual or perceived personal characteristic including without limitation race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, socioeconomic status, academic status, disability, gender, gender identity, physical appearance, health condition, or sexual orientation;

“Bullying” means the intentional harassment, intimidation, humiliation, ridicule, defamation, or threat or incitement of violence by a student against another student or public school employee by a written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that may address an attribute of the other student, public school employee, or person with whom the other student or public school employee is associated and that causes or creates actual or reasonably foreseeable:

- Physical harm to a public school employee or student or damage to the public school employee's or student's property;
- Substantial interference with a student's education or with a public school employee's role in education;
- A hostile educational environment for one (1) or more students or public school employees due to the severity, persistence, or pervasiveness of the act; or
- Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment;

“Electronic act” means without limitation a communication or image transmitted by means of an electronic device, including without limitation a telephone, wireless phone or other wireless communications device, computer, or pager that results in the substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment.

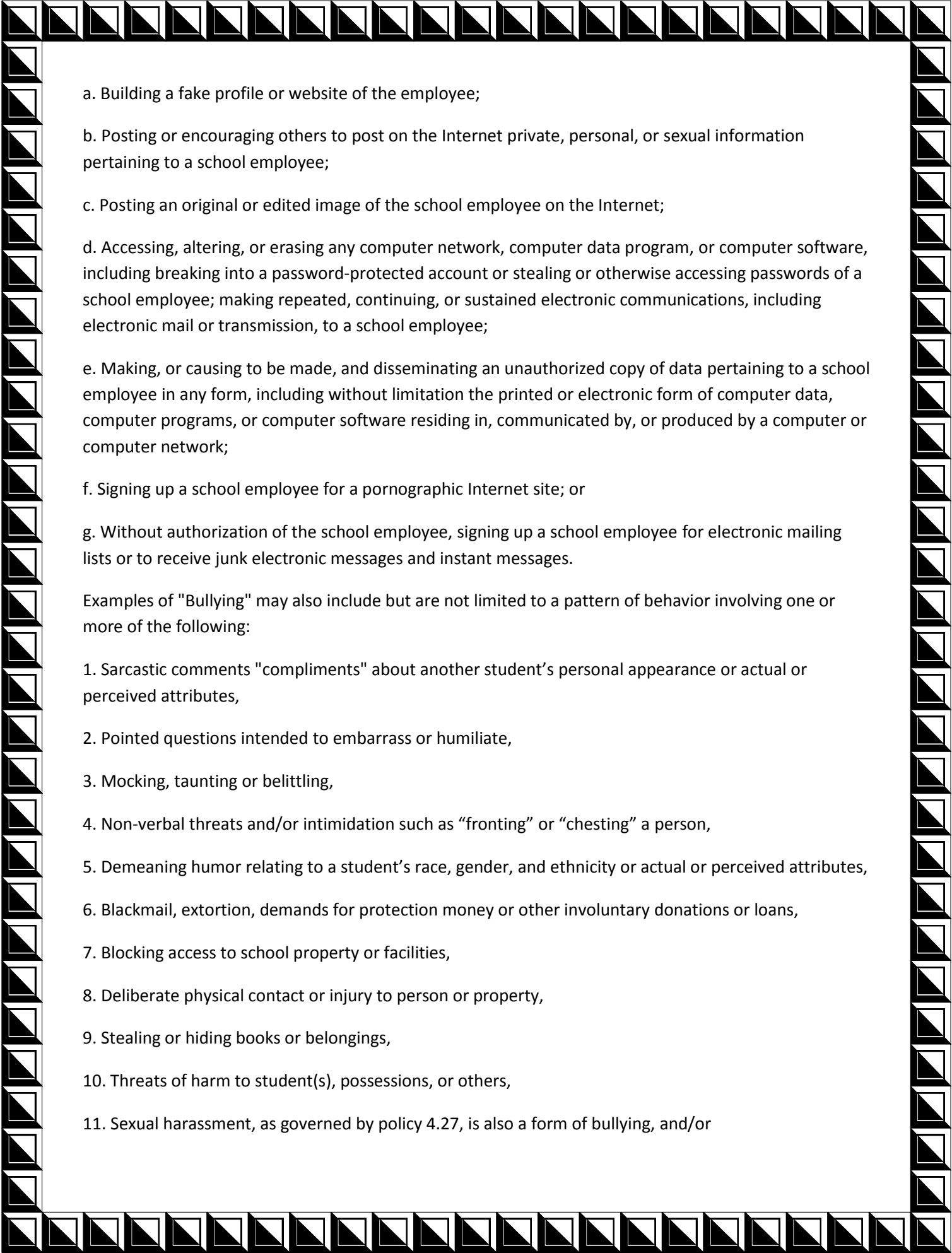
Electronic acts of bullying are prohibited whether or not the electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic act is directed specifically at students or school personnel and maliciously intended for the purpose of disrupting school, and has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose;

“Harassment” means a pattern of unwelcome verbal or physical conduct relating to another person's constitutionally or statutorily protected status that causes, or reasonably should be expected to cause, substantial interference with the other's performance in the school environment; and

“Substantial disruption” means without limitation that any one or more of the following occur as a result of the bullying:

- Necessary cessation of instruction or educational activities;
- Inability of students or educational staff to focus on learning or function as an educational unit because of a hostile environment;
- Severe or repetitive disciplinary measures are needed in the classroom or during educational activities; or
- Exhibition of other behaviors by students or educational staff that substantially interfere with the learning environment.

Cyberbullying of School Employees is expressly prohibited and includes, but is not limited to:

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- a. Building a fake profile or website of the employee;
 - b. Posting or encouraging others to post on the Internet private, personal, or sexual information pertaining to a school employee;
 - c. Posting an original or edited image of the school employee on the Internet;
 - d. Accessing, altering, or erasing any computer network, computer data program, or computer software, including breaking into a password-protected account or stealing or otherwise accessing passwords of a school employee; making repeated, continuing, or sustained electronic communications, including electronic mail or transmission, to a school employee;
 - e. Making, or causing to be made, and disseminating an unauthorized copy of data pertaining to a school employee in any form, including without limitation the printed or electronic form of computer data, computer programs, or computer software residing in, communicated by, or produced by a computer or computer network;
 - f. Signing up a school employee for a pornographic Internet site; or
 - g. Without authorization of the school employee, signing up a school employee for electronic mailing lists or to receive junk electronic messages and instant messages.

Examples of "Bullying" may also include but are not limited to a pattern of behavior involving one or more of the following:

1. Sarcastic comments "compliments" about another student's personal appearance or actual or perceived attributes,
2. Pointed questions intended to embarrass or humiliate,
3. Mocking, taunting or belittling,
4. Non-verbal threats and/or intimidation such as "fronting" or "chesting" a person,
5. Demeaning humor relating to a student's race, gender, and ethnicity or actual or perceived attributes,
6. Blackmail, extortion, demands for protection money or other involuntary donations or loans,
7. Blocking access to school property or facilities,
8. Deliberate physical contact or injury to person or property,
9. Stealing or hiding books or belongings,
10. Threats of harm to student(s), possessions, or others,
11. Sexual harassment, as governed by policy 4.27, is also a form of bullying, and/or

12. Teasing or name-calling based on the belief or perception that an individual is not conforming to expected gender roles (Example: “Slut”) or conduct or is homosexual, regardless of whether the student self-identifies as homosexual (Examples: “You are so gay.” “Fag” “Queer”).

Students are encouraged to report behavior they consider to be bullying; including a single action which if allowed continuing would constitute bullying, to their teacher or the building principal. The report may be made anonymously. Teachers and other school employees who have witnessed, or are reliably informed that, a student has been a victim of behavior they consider to be bullying, including a single action which if allowed to continue would constitute bullying, shall report the incident(s) to the principal. Parents or legal guardians may submit written reports of incidents they feel constitute bullying, or if allowed to continue would constitute bullying, to the principal. The principal shall be responsible for investigating the incident(s) to determine if disciplinary action is warranted.

The person or persons reporting behavior they consider to be bullying shall not be subject to retaliation or reprisal in any form. Students found to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, consideration may be given to other violations of the student handbook which may have simultaneously occurred.

Notice of what constitutes bullying, the District’s prohibition against bullying, and the consequences for students who bully shall be conspicuously posted in every classroom, cafeteria, restroom, gymnasium, auditorium, and school buses. Parents, students, school volunteers, and employees shall be given copies of the notice.

The consequence for violation of this policy shall be a minimum of a conference with the school LCSW for ten sessions, or referral back to the student’s home district.

Copies of this policy shall be available upon request.

Legal Reference: A.C.A. § 6-18-514 A.C.A. § 5-71-217

HEALTH SERVICES

Health Services will be available for all students at each building. A Registered Nurse will assess, evaluate, plan, and implement a comprehensive health plan for all children.

Students with Special Health Care Needs

Students with special health care needs will be referred to appropriate medical professionals. The nurse will determine whether the student’s needs are of emergency or non-emergency status. The school nurse will also make community referrals involving dental procedures and/or vision and hearing procedures.

Invasive Medical Procedures

The school nurse will provide emergency care until the student can be transported to proper medical facilities should an accident of serious nature occur. Unless it is an extreme situation, a school nurse will not perform invasive medical procedures.

Custodial Health Care Services

The school nurse will assist parents and/or guardians with conferences by home visits and phone conversations regarding the health of students. The school nurse will also help facilitate assistance should the need arise.

Other States & Statements of Immunization

Students who transfer from other states will be given one month to be in compliance with AR state law regarding immunizations.

Immunization

The school nurse will maintain health records on all students following the requirements set forth by the Arkansas Dept. of Health and Arkansas State Law. The school nurse and/or school counselor and principal will send letters to non-compliant students. The school nurse will follow-up to insure compliance. Students with medical/religious exemptions are required to request annual approval with Arkansas Department of Health.

Responsibilities of the School Nurse

The nurse's time will be spent in direct care of students, conferences with parents, evaluation, and follow-up of health issues, and documentation of required immunizations.

Other duties will be as follows:

- Perform physical screenings: Vision/hearing, teacher/parent referrals, and scoliosis screenings for required students and referrals as needed
- Available to do health-related units in the classroom such as hygiene, growth and development, and drug units
- Supply information to special community agencies as requested

School Health Service Unit

The school nurse will direct the school health unit, which will provide emergency care, first aid and/or daily health care for students with special needs. There will also be staff members trained in CPR on site.

SCHOOL SUICIDE & CRISIS PLAN

Suicide Prevention

ASBVI will provide distribution of “The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and Arkansas.”

Inclusive School Crisis Plan

ASBVI School Crisis and Intervention Plan

School Crisis Team: School Counselor, LSCW, and administration team

Professional Development Requirements

Scheduled Professional Development (Act 969 of 2013)

- Child Maltreatment Mandated Reporter - two hours in 2013-2014 and every fourth year thereafter
- Parent Involvement - two hours in 2014-2015 and every fourth year thereafter
- Teen Suicide Awareness and Prevention - two hours in 2015-2016 and every fourth year thereafter
- Arkansas History* - two hours in 2016-2017 and every fourth year thereafter for those who provide* instruction in Arkansas History

PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION FOR AT RISK STUDENTS

ASBVI is committed to providing a comprehensive program to prevent school failure, drug abuse and suicide by providing information, skill development, support and positive role modeling for students. Our program includes the following components:

- Progressive, Proactive No Use Policy
- Preventative Curriculum
- Skill Development
- Training for Students and Faculty
- Student Assistance Programs

- Peer Programs
- Special One Time Programs and Assemblies

ALTERNATIVE STUDENTS SERVICES AND PERSONNEL

Medicaid 1-800-482-8988 or 1-800-482-5431

Arkansas Children's Hospital 501-364-1100

Bridgeway 1-800-245-0011

Rivendale 1-800-316-1255

Methodist 501-803-3388

Pinnacle Point 501-223-3322

Help Lines

DHS Local 501-321-2583

Poison Control 1-800-376-3766

Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-482-5964

Missing and Exploited Children Hotline 1-800-843-5678

National Suicide Hotline 1-800-273-8255